

NOTES FROM LONDON.

POLITICAL—ACADEMICAL—PERSONAL—LITERARY.
[FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]

LONDON, January 23.

I copy the following from *The Globe*, an evening paper of London, Conservative in politics, with a circulation understood to exceed 10,000 copies:

Day after day telegrams arrive from New-York of the furious mouthings of O'Donnovan, "the" with reference to O'Donnovan's "treason," or the ridiculous resolutions of Con-gressman Robinson, who, among other things, intends to persuade Congress to send Ireland for a round sum in dollars. But the genuine opinion of sensible America rarely reaches us. Few English readers, for instance, are aware that *The New-York Tribune*, the man who was hanged, and whose many doubts that he deserved his fate, really expresses the opinion of every American whose opinion has any value at all, even in New-York.

There may be said to be the words of truth and soberness. They are one of those notes "By the Way" which are often among the most pungent of the comments to be found in the daily press.

Mr. Richard Power, who was formerly whip to the Irish party, has been letting in a little light upon the secrets of the Parnellites prison-house.

It has been supposed that Mr. Parnell selected all candidates for Home Rule constituents. Mr. Power says this is not so. The constituency may, in certain cases, be allowed a voice in the matter.

The only thing that Mr. Parnell, moderate soul that he is, really insists upon is that the candidate,

when selected and elected, shall do as he bid. He must subscribe in advance four pledges—that he will sit with the Parnellites, vote with them, be bound by the decisions of the party, and never ask a favor from the English Government. On these easy terms he may have Mr. Parnell's support, even though he be not Mr. Parnell's original choice. There are plenty of candidates, even on these terms.

Mr. Gibson has again been beaten for the Lord Rectorship of the University of St. Andrews, and Lord Reay is elected by a majority of eight votes. This time the contest was mainly political. Lord Reay may have got a few votes as a Scot, from those of his young countrymen who prefer a Scot to an Irishman for head of a Scottish University. And Mr. Malloch's appearance as a Tory candidate for the Parliamentary representation of the burghs of St. Andrews, ought to have been worth something to a Liberal candidate for the Lord Rectorship. Lord Reay is one of those young noblemen of whom Scotland has at this moment six or seven, or more, whose abilities and character support and enhance the accidental distinction of a peerage. He is of an old family, the fourteenth holder of the title, a Dutchman by birth, a Scot by descent, an Englishman by naturalization, and an English Peer by the grace of Mr. Gladstone and Her Majesty the Queen. The English peerage was conferred on him in order that he might sit in the House of Lords, to which, being a Liberal, he had no possible chance of being sent as what is called a representative peer for Scotland. There are peers from Scotland who sit in the House of Lords, but the only thing they represent is the will of the Duke of Buccleuch.

Mr. Lowell's resignation, I may add, does not cancel his election. He was duly chosen, Lord Rector, and Lord Rector he was until he ceased to be by his own act. Everybody is sorry for his withdrawal, and nobody outside of Scotland can be expected to understand the technical difficulties which formed to the mind of Principal Tulloch an obstacle to his retention of the office for the usual period. It would require a Scotch court to say whether these difficulties had or had not, in the last resort, a legal existence, or whether they constituted a valid objection to the holding of the office by the envoy of a foreign State. Mr. Lowell, however, acted wisely and gracefully in resigning. Neither for him, nor for his country, nor yet for the University would a legal controversy on such a point have been a desirable thing.

Lord Tennyson, it is now announced, is in the Lord Chamberlain's Department. The statement is as mysterious as it is authoritative. The Lord Chamberlain we have all heard of. He is a great officer of the Royal Household and of State. He has precedence over almost everybody. He has jurisdiction over some of the London theatres, licenses plays, and prescribes certain rules for the protection of the public from fire; which, it is said, are sometimes obeyed by managers. In the person of Lord Kenmare, he is a popular official. But what has he to do with Lord Tennyson or Lord Tennyson with him? Is it as Poet Laureate that the new ornament of the House of Lords comes under the Lord Chamberlain's control? And is there, on the whole, any conceivable use or beauty in this new title of England's greatest poet which can repay him for being in anybody's department?

The election of M. Edmond About as one of the Forty of the French Academy gives rise to comments in the English press, some of which are more curious than judicious. That great journal over which Mr. Chenevry presides declares in its usual thunder-tones that among those things which are wholly admirable in M. Edmond About's novels is their morality. Their morality is to be extolled, their tone eminently healthy. Has Mr. Chenevry, one must ask, ever read "Madelon," and if he has, does he consider the morality of that very clever novel worthy of panegyric? Would he recommend it for a Sunday-school library, or even for the drawing-room table? He praises M. About's style French critics have thought M. About's style deficient in charm and in that finish which the canons of literary art in France demand. But if Mr. Chenevry is satisfied there is no more to be said. So when he affirms that M. Edmond About is indeed a good novelist, and that his books are well written, he has no equals among rising French novelists. He has superiors. I apprehend no critic familiar with modern French fiction would put About on a level with M. Alphonse Daudet, a much younger man. But it is useless to argue with a writer who brackets Zola, Dumas the younger, and Octave Feuillet, and deals with all three as offend in the same kind.

The controversy about Mr. Barnum's slate-colored white elephant, with flesh-colored patches, continues, and apparently will continue, but the public has perhaps had enough of it. One great journal devotes a leading article to-day to Young, and the illustrated papers give portraits of him in every hue and shade of mottled blackness, save one, which is really white, Young having his "great-coat" on. Biographies and portraits of Mr. Barnum are published, apropos of his newest speculation. I read in one of them that he is a strict teetotaller, a great moralist, and has lectured to seven hundred audiences upon the conduct of life. And of such, I suppose, are the Kingdom of Heaven.

Mr. Marriott's pamphlet on Mr. Chamberlain has reached its seventeenth thousand, an enormous circulation. There are points in it which may prove damaging to the President of the Board of Trade. Mr. Marriott is not a practised writer and does not handle his material in the most effective way. He is, no doubt, indebted to Jesse Colting and other friends of Mr. Chamberlain for some of the attention his performance has attracted. An answer has appeared, which is said to be much weaker than the original.

A firm of book-sellers in Boston appear to be discontented with the statement I made the other day about the fall in value of the so-called *editions de luxe* published in this country. I quoted the remarks of a London dealer that he should be glad to sell the Fielding at cost price; any of the others at half price. To make sure of the facts, I have again asked him, and I find I quoted him correctly. Half price, however, meant half the current price, not, as I understood it, half the cost price.

The original price was a guinea a volume to the dealer (\$150 for the set), and the selling price was, in London, \$200—in some cases more. It can now be bought for about half that sum; can be but is not. The market is glutted. Wholesale and

retail dealers alike have more copies than they know what to do with, and the price is likely to be lower before it is higher. The edition was of 1,000 copies, and it does not appear that there are 1,000 people, nor anything like that number, who care to burden their shelves with volumes too ponderous to be read with comfort.

Many of the other *editions de luxe* are to be had at half their cost. Indeed, the bookseller whom I am quoting said to-day that to a purchaser who would take his whole stock of them he should be glad to dispose of the whole in a lump at half their cost prices. I am sorry if my error about the Dickens has misled anybody, but the general remark on this class of books holds true. It was an ill-judged speculation and the books do not maintain their value in the market. The *Critic*, which is not always critical, thinks I should bear in mind that the editions in question are unwieldy folios, and that folios are the hardest books to sell. It is true they are unwieldy, but they are not folios. G. W. S.

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